

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend the first paragraph on page 2 as follows:

The present invention relates to the modification of rapid tests, such as immunochromatographic tests, presently used to diagnose such diseases as otitis media and pneumococcal pneumonia, to reduce the incidence in children particularly of false positive results attributable to nasopharyngeal colonization of otherwise healthy individuals by the same bacteria that are responsible for otitis media and either pneumococcal pneumonia, to reduce the incidence in children particularly of false positive results attributable to nasopharyngeal colonization of otherwise healthy individuals by the same bacteria that are responsible for otitis media and either pneumococcal pneumonia per se or ~~other respiratory pneumonic~~ diseases clinically indistinguishable therefrom.

Please amend the first full paragraph on page 4 as follows:

The NOW® bioassay is described and claimed in co-pending, commonly assigned U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/399,710 filed September 16, 1999, ~~which is incorporated herein by reference~~ and also its parent application Serial No. 09/156,486 filed September 18, 1998 and now abandoned.